

Dear Honorable Committee Members,

I am asking for support from the state legislature to fund repairs needed for the Osborn Aquatic Center (OAC) in Corvallis. Osborn's indoor pools, locker rooms and showers closed last year due to structural deficits discovered in the roof support structure.

The Osborn resource is a hub of activity in the Corvallis community and is in operation seven days/week. The physical and mental health benefits of regular exercise are widely understood and the programs at OAC support the community in myriad ways: swim lessons, adaptive water therapy, and swim meets (including the Senior Games) that attracts swimmers and their families from all over the U.S. west coast benefitting economic development in Corvallis.

OAC is one of only two indoor long-course (50m) pools in the state of Oregon that can host large swim competitions and, as such, is a critical resource to the swimming community for year-round activities. I have been an active Masters swimmer for over 25 years, and OAC and its terrific staff of coaches was one of the key reasons my wife and I decided to build our home in Corvallis. The Masters program at OAC offers daily coached instruction and work-outs morning, noon and evenings in both indoor and outdoor facilities.

The Corvallis Aquatic Team (CAT), coached by Rick Guenther, produced an Olympic athlete, Jacob Pebley. Jacob swam for Crescent Valley High School and trained at OAC before attending the University of California at Berkeley and ultimately competing in the 200 meter backstroke at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Numerous other youngsters who learned to swim at OAC have used competitive swimming to qualify for college scholarships.

And last, according to the CDC, Oregon has one of the highest rates of drowning in the U.S. ¹ The lack of pools (and therefore access to swim lessons) has been cited as a reason for this tragic statistic. In the last five years OAC has trained and certified 749 community members in CPR/AED, 205 people in babysitter training and 397 lifeguards. All this not including the hundreds of kids that take swim lessons at OAC each year.

In closing, I hope I made it clear what an important and vital resource Osborn Aquatic Center is to both the local community and to the state of Oregon. Please help us fund the repairs to this facility and future proof it for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Chris Hagler

CAT Masters Swimmer

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/drowning/data-research/index.html>